



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/629,192	07/29/2003	L. Andrew Koman	090928.A198	5683
5073	7590	11/30/2007	EXAMINER	
BAKER BOTTs L.L.P.			ARAJ, MICHAEL J	
2001 ROSS AVENUE				
SUITE 600			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
DALLAS, TX 75201-2980			3733	
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			11/30/2007	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

ptomail1@bakerbotts.com
glenda.orrantia@bakerbotts.com

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/629,192	KOMAN ET AL.	
Examiner	Art Unit		
Michael J. Araj	3733		

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 March 2007.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 3-7 and 9-19 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) 11-19 is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 3-7,9 and 10 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 9/17/07, 9/20/07.
4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Status

Claims 3-19 are pending. Claims 11-19 are withdrawn from further consideration.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 3-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Claes et al. (WO 98/20802)

Claes et al. disclose an external fixation device comprising a first portion (10) and a second portion (11) with a first and second clamp assembly (15) for releasably attaching the respective first and second portions with at least one bone pin (4) and a coupling assembly (12) joining the first and second portion. This coupling assembly can be controlled for incremental rotation in the horizontal plane independent of rotation in the vertical plane and incremental rotation in the vertical plane is independent of rotation in the horizontal plane. The first and second portions are elongated and have generally rectangular cross sections with their respective lengths being substantially the same. Also disclosed are a first control and a second control for incremental positioning of the first and second clamp assembly relative to the coupling assembly, independent of the other clamp. Claes et al. also disclose a first worm gear mounted on one end of the first

portion, a second worm gear mounted on an adjacent end of the second portion, with the first and the second worm gears being engaged with each other. The first worm shaft is operable to incrementally position the first worm gear and a second worm shaft operable to incrementally position the second worm gear. Also disclosed is a first clamp screw (25) operable to lock the first worm gear in a desired position relative to the first position while a second clamp screw (27) is operable to lock the second worm gear in a desired position relative to the second portion. With regard the statement of intended use and other functional statements; they do not impose any structural limitations on the claims distinguishable over Claes et al. which is capable of being used as claimed if one so desires to do so. *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963). Furthermore, the law of anticipation does not require that the reference "teach" what the subject patent teaches, but rather it is only necessary that the claims under attack "read on" something in the reference. *Kalman v. Kimberly Clark Corp.*, 218 USPQ 781 (CCPA 1983). Furthermore, the manner in which a device is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from prior art apparatus satisfying the claimed structural limitations. *Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ2d 1647 (1987).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed September 13, 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that Claes fails to disclose or suggest the use of clamp screws to lock the worm gears in place, indicating that the Office Action

incorrectly points to elements in the patent that signify different elements. The examiner did not incorrectly point to the element of 25 and 27 but only used these parts merely to show the screws in order to clarify the examiner's interpretation. Claes is silent to these portions of elements actually being screw, but one of ordinary skill in the art could properly assume these two parts of elements 25 and 27 are screw. Claes also discloses connecting screws that are used to lock the device in position (background information of the U.S. Patent No. 6,428,540).

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

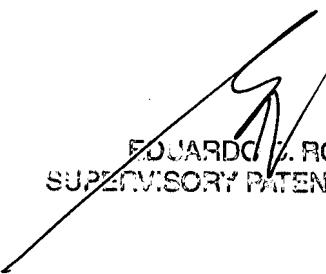
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael J. Araj whose telephone number is 571-272-5963. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert can be reached on 571-272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


MJA


EDUARDO V. ROBERT
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER